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20 June 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: John R. Horton
National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT: Conversation with Ambassador John D. Negroponte (Honduras)
at State Department, 20 June 1983, 1100 hours

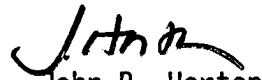
1. Concerning Nicaragua, Ambassador Negroponte feels that key judgments are: How will Pastora do? And the capabilities and the weaknesses of the Sandinistas to deal with the Contras and the Contras' ability to sustain themselves inside Nicaragua, rather than along the border.

2. He reminded me that there are four policy points to keep in mind: First, interdiction of the arms flow into El Salvador and secondly, the presence of the Cubans and other foreign government elements in Nicaragua, our pressure to cut back the military buildup in Nicaragua, and pressure on the Sandinistas to include opposition elements in the government. Negroponte feels that the Cuban presence in Nicaragua is a good argument for ratcheting up the pressure on the Sandinistas, as in Afghanistan.

3. For instance, if the Contras become so strong that the Cubans must be there to keep the Sandinistas in power, this gives the US a new range of possibilities.

4. This brings us to intelligence questions such as, to what extent the Sandinistas have control over their own fate and to what extent Havana and Moscow dictate their moves. Between the extremes of interdiction versus overthrow, we might find the Sandinistas' agreeing to some of our demands in exchange for our leaving them alone, said Negroponte.

5. Finally, Negroponte expressed his concern about the unification of communist groups in Honduras. Right now it may only be a broom closet operation, but the propaganda against Honduras from Cuba is growing. He feels there is insufficient correlation by the US of propaganda campaigns with other intelligence information, and he feels that the CIA must concentrate on "tracking of the extreme left" because nobody else will do so.


John R. Horton

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